EVALUATION FACTORS TO IDENTIFY ALLOTMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT

Growing Season Use
Livestock use overlaps more than 50 percent of upland habitat primary growing season with no pasture(or herding, water) rotation of use.

Duration of Use
Livestock use is longer than 2 months in any pasture or allotment.

Distribution of Use
Livestock use occurs disproportionately in certain habitats or geographic regions within the allotment.

No Allotment Management Plan or Agreement
No AMP or agreement or informal/verbal agreement exists for grazing management within the allotment(more specific than grazing permit).

Plan/Agreement Present but Not Working
An AMP or agreement(formal or informal) is present, however, this is not being followed or if being followed resource objectives are not being achieved.

Riparian Habitat not PFC or FAR with Upward Trend
Riparian habitat has been evaluated for proper functioning condition and does not rate out as either meeting PFC or Functioning-at-risk with an upward trend.

303(D) List
Stream segments within this allotment have been identified by the State of Wyoming as being impaired in terms of water quality.

Noxious Weeds
Plants designated on the State of Wyoming noxious weed list which have been mapped or are known to occur in an allotment(example - knapweeds).

Non-native, Invasive plants
Plants designated on a BLM national list and which are considered as problems in local level resource management that have been mapped or are known to occur in an allotment(example - halogeton).

Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat
Habitat that is known to or could support threatened and endangered species or candidate species for listing is present within an allotment.

Sensitive Species Habitat
Habitat that is known to or could support Wyoming BLM listed sensitive species is present within an allotment.

Livestock Affecting Wildlife Habitat
Livestock are considered a factor in an allotment which is not meeting Standard #4 - Rangelands are capable of sustaining viable populations and a diversity of native plant and animal species appropriate to the habitat.

Wild Horse Numbers are above AMLs
Wild horse numbers within a wild horse herd management area(HMA) that overlaps one or more allotments exceeds the appropriate management level established for the HMA.

Wild Horse Resource Issues

Wild horses are considered a factor in an allotment or resource value which is not meeting healthy rangeland standards.

Wild Horses outside HMA

Wild horses are present in an allotment which is not within the boundaries of a wild horse herd management area.

PFC or Closer Look Needed

Allotments for which the Proper Functioning Condition assessment of riparian habitat has not been completed, or where review of previous factors identified for an allotment and review by an interdisciplinary group recommend taking a closer look at an allotment for assessment of Healthy Rangeland Standards.

S & G Already Done

Individual allotment assessment for Healthy Rangeland Standards have already been completed. These allotments would be included in the broader level field review and discussion that would occur for wild horses, fisheries, watershed and big game herd unit levels of analysis.

Allotment Only Partially in Watershed

Allotment lies within more than one fourth order level watershed unit.

Standard #1 - Watershed Health

For a watershed unit, different potential sampling sites would be identified according to soils, precipitation, and landform. A stratified random sampling scheme would then be used to pick sites to assess rangeland health (see technical reference 1734-6,2000). This would not require sampling in every allotment or pasture. A minimum sample size per watershed unit would be ?????? In addition, any existing information relating to ground cover/bare ground percentages would be included in this analysis.

Standard #2 - Wetland/Riparian Habitat Health

Proper functioning condition assessment for all habitat on public lands would be evaluated. This would continue to be looked at for each allotment since management solutions are likely to be on an operator/allotment basis.

Standard #3 - Upland Plant Habitat Health

This assessment would use SVIM data, forestry data, and other research, monitoring, and professional knowledge relating to plant community health, including species diversity, age class, structure and cover.

Standard #4 - Wildlife Habitat, Threatened and Endangered Species, Weeds

Assessments would be focused on known or perceived habitat concerns that are specific to the watershed being evaluated. In the Muddy Creek and Little Snake River watershed units the preliminary areas of focus are:

Wildlife - Mule Deer Crucial Winter Range, Sage Grouse Nesting/Early Brood-rearing Habitat

Fisheries - Range and habitat selection by three BLM sensitive fish species found in Muddy Creek (roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, and bluehead sucker)

Weeds - Identify and map new locations of noxious weeds or non-native, invasive plants with special emphasis on areas adjacent to known weed areas

Standard #5 - Water Quality

Utilize existing monitoring data, research, special project data, spot data from grab samples, and information from other partners in the watershed (Little Snake River Conservation District, U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality). Other indirect indicators of water quality trend such as changes in bank cover and channel width and morphology would also be included in this analysis.

Standard #6 - Air Quality

Continue to follow guidance from the State of Wyoming Air Quality Division that air quality standards are currently being met in this watershed(or by region).